**18th Century British History (Abridged): (1700-1799)**

**Timeline:**

* 1702 – William III dies; Queen Anne’s reign begins
* 1707 – Great Britain is formed with England and Scotland’s union
* 1714 – The first Georgian king ascends the throne—George I
* 1720 – wallpaper becomes fashionable
* 1727 – George II becomes king
* 1741 – Handel composes *Messiah*
* 1756 – The Seven Years’ War begins
* 1760 – George III begins reign
* 1765 – Parliament passes the Stamp Act
* 1769 – James Watt patents the steam engine

**Political and Economic Developments:**

* The Glorious Revolution put limitations on the monarchy which much later led to real democracy
* The Act of Union of 1707 politically joined England and Scotland as Great Britain.
* Two political parties: Whigs (who support the British nobility) and the Tories (who support the growing merchant class) form alliances and control Parliament
* During George I’s reign, the king’s cabinet of advisers were chosen from Parliament, the greatest or “prime” minister of the time was Robert Walpole, a Whig
* Seven Years’ War (1756-1763) with France
* Industrial Revolution – a gradual process of change from “cottage industries” to factory manufacturing
* The Industrial Revolution eventually, along with the Seven Years’ War, and irregular taxation led to George III becoming a tyrant in American history books

**Life and Times:**

* The human mind could achieve anything was the prevailing philosophical thought
* A fascination with ancient Greece and Rome arose
* A hierarchy arose in society in the following order: nobility, then the landed gentry, then the merchants and professionals (like doctors and lawyers), then the majority—the poor
* Life was pleasant for the not poor
* Both sexes wore wigs or powdered their hair until a 1790s hair powder tax led to “natural” hairdos
* Scientific and technological advances occur: Watt’s steam engine, Hargreaves’ spinning jenny (1770), vaccinations, the “coach” becomes a means of travel

**Literature:**

* Satire becomes a popular form of prose and poetic writing
* Daniel Defoe writes *Robinson Crusoe*, one of the first true novels
* Jonathan Swift—*Gulliver’s Travels*
* Samuel Johnson writes the first *Dictionary of the English Language*
* William Blake—*Songs of Innocence*
* James Boswell—*The Life of Samuel Johnson*
* Alexander Pope writes “The Rape of the Lock”
* First major literary magazines begin—*The Tatler* and *The Spectator*
* The gothic novel, the picaresque novel, the novel of sentiment, and the novel of manners are introduced